

BSSC grants awarded to Gatormade Trailers, Inc. benefit Kentucky Tech – Pulaski County

Gatormade Trailers, Inc. was recently approved to receive a grant and tax credit from Bluegrass State Skills Corporation (BSSC). Both applications were written by Jill Ralston, industry training and development specialist for the Office of Career and Technical Education.

Kentucky Tech – Pulaski County also benefitted since the company is located in the Pulaski County Industrial Complex in Somerset.



KY Tech- Pulaski Co. ATC welding instructor Scott Johnson receives two "educational" checks from Gatormade Trailers owner Elsa Brown. Photo (l to r): Jill Ralston, OCTE industry training and development specialist; Johnson, and Brown.

A recommendation made by Kentucky Tech-Pulaski Co. principal Beth Hargis to Elsa Brown, the company's owner, opened the door for Ralston to meet Mr. Ernie Alexander, Gatormade's operations manager. During their meeting, Ralston explained the BSSC process and was able to determine that Gatormade met BSSC's requirements for both a training grant and tax credit. As a result of the effort, a win-win situation emerged – Gatormade profited with two grants and Kentucky Tech - Pulaski County received a financial service fee that can be written into each application for an educational facility.

According to welding instructor Scott Johnson, "the service fee will benefit the school's welding program because the money will be used to buy supplies for my students to use."



Hargis:

"Like most schools and businesses in this economy, our budget has taken a significant hit. However, our community has been wonderful in supporting us. The service fees we were awarded as a result of the grant and tax credit will allow our students to continue to receive the highly skilled training needed in today's workforce. We are proud to be located in Pulaski County and of the great working relationship we have with our community. It is my hope that other Pulaski County businesses can take advantage of BSSC opportunities."

"This has been a wonderful experience for our school. Mr. Johnson has taken the initiative to develop a great working relationship with Gatormade and they now employ two of our former welding students. Because of the technical education and skills training students learned in class, they are adequately prepared to enter the workforce equipped with an exceptional work ethic. We are proud of the reputation Mr. Johnson has created for his program and the area technology center."



Ralston:

"Although grants are competitive and every company may not have their respective application approved every year, in my opinion it is worth the time to assist them in applying for these grants."

"In my experience, there have been and continue to be many Kentucky companies that are not aware of BSSC funding opportunities. We, Kentucky Tech, can partner with local eligible companies and assist them with BSSC grants if they request our services. Because of this service, we are in a position to lend a hand to our Kentucky Tech schools in being able to receive a \$400 educational fee for both the grant and tax credit. This is a great partnership that all Kentucky Tech schools can benefit from in their local communities."

We have been able to partner with more companies over this past year. Gatormade was the recipient of a positive outcome and Kentucky Tech-Pulaski County received a financial windfall to offset funding cuts from this economic recession. To me, that's a successful outcome for everyone."



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